Margot

by Jillian Cantor



About the Book

Anne Frank has long been a symbol of bravery and hope, but there were two sisters hidden in the annex, two young Jewish girls, one a cultural icon made famous by her published diary and the other, nearly forgotten.

In the spring of 1959, THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK has just come to the silver screen to great acclaim, and a young woman named Margie Franklin is working in Philadelphia as a secretary at a Jewish law firm. On the surface she lives a quiet life, but Margie has a secret: a life she once lived, a past and a religion she has denied, and a family and a country she left behind.

Margie Franklin is really Margot Frank, older sister of Anne, who did not die in Bergen-Belsen as reported, but who instead escaped the Nazis for America. But now, as her sister becomes a global icon, Margie?s carefully constructed American life begins to fall apart. A new relationship threatens to overtake the young love that sustained her during the war, and her past and present begin to collide. Margie is forced to come to terms with Margot, with the people she loved, and with a life swept up into the course of history.

Discussion Guide

1.When Margot first meets Bryda, she introduces herself as Margie. What drives her to hide her full name and true identity? If she had confided in Bryda, how do you think the story would have changed?

2.Discuss the role memory plays in the book. What impact do memories have on the truth?both in Margie?s life and in your own?

3.Margie?s uncertainty about the past illustrates how one?s memory can change over time. How is Anne?s diary and Margie?s relationship to it affected by this truth?

4.Margie feels caged in by the past and does not embrace the new freedoms of being a woman in 1960s America. In contrast, Shelby relishes her growing freedom. How do these two opposing ideas of womanhood influence Margie?s path over the course of the novel?

5.Margie?s distinction between religion and ritual plays a big role in the novel. It is difficult for her to incorporate her religion into her American life. How does Margie?s acceptance of her faith relate to her acceptance of her past and present?

6.Do you believe Margie?s fantasy of a life with Pete in Levittown could ever happen? What do you think that life would be like for them? Would Margie ever embrace her old persona of ?Margot,? or would she remain Margie Franklin?

7.What centers Joshua?s morality? We see him both defend criminals and go out of his way to take on cases his father denies because he feels a moral obligation. What drives that sense of obligation? How do we see his religion affecting his life and choices?

8.In many ways this is a novel about sisters. How do the feelings Margie has?both in the past and in the present?about Anne reflect the complicated nature of sister relationships? How does having and losing her sister impact her, in 1959 and beyond?

9.Does this fictionalized account affect your view of the Frank family and the real-life events surrounding the Holocaust?

10. Why do you think Margie is reluctant to reconnect with her father? What reasons does she have for avoiding contact? If she had contacted her father immediately upon learning he was alive, how do you think the story would have changed?

11. What is the importance of Joshua?s relationship with his father to the story? Shelby?s relationship with her sister Peggy? How do these relationships compare to Margie?s?

12. Margot Frank?s diary was never recovered. If it had been, do you think it would have changed our understanding of the Holocaust and life inside the Annex for the Franks?

Author Bio

Jillian Cantor has a BA from Penn State University and an MFA from the University of Arizona. She is the *USA Today* and internationally bestselling author of 15 novels for teens and adults, which have been translated into 15 languages. Cantor currently lives in Arizona with her husband and two sons.

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